What Is At 'Stake' In The Case Method?

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Abstract: *This paper is an attempt to understand the relationship between a situation analysis and a stakeholder analysis in the context of the case method of education in business schools. It argues that we must differentiate between the existential and material dimensions in a case analysis since a stake is not necessarily pre-given in a business situation, but emerges from within the discursive contexts of a case analysis. Most of the assumptions about human behavior in firms during a case analysis are drawn from agency theory though case instructors are not consciously aware of doing so. This is usually the case even if case instructors have not studied agency theory and are teaching cases not directly related to finance or financial theory. Agency theory presupposes that what is in contention in firms is only a material stake and does not incorporate existential elements like the quest for identity in the behavior of firms. It is therefore important to articulate a stake as a performative speech-act that emerges in a specific discursive context during a case analysis. This is often forgotten because business schools like the glamour of the case method and the certainty of the lecture method without realizing that success in the case method depends upon understanding the part played by anxiety, desire, and the inter-subjective dimensions of narrative logic in a case discussion. It is these factors that determine not only what is desirable for the firm or a decision-maker as possible options, but also affect the forms of financial and qualitative valuation that seek to justify the chosen option in the context of solving business problems.*
Keywords: *Agency Theory, Anxiety, Case Method, Desire, Discursive Asymmetry, Intersubjective Logic, Narrative, Situation Analysis, Stakeholder Analysis*

I. Introduction

What is a stake-holder analysis? What is a case analysis? What is the relationship between a stake-holder analysis and a case analysis? What will a psychoanalytic interpretation of the case method of education in business schools look like? These then are the four theoretical questions that are addressed in this paper. The title of this paper however is an attempt to 'yoke' these questions together as an 'over-arching' theoretical problem in the context of the case method. These problems should interest not only case instructors who are teaching in business schools, but also those who are interested in the role played by the case method in the history and theory of education. I start with a situation analysis of how a stake-holder analysis is usually done in business schools and management programmes. The context is, needless to say, that of a typical case analysis. The purpose of this situation analysis is to examine the theoretical presuppositions in such an exercise since the modalities of an elementary stake-holder analysis as taught in business schools usually conflate the differences between the 'existential' stake and the 'material' stake in a given situation during a case analysis - the former is often an 'emerging' stake while the latter could well be 'pre-given.' In other words, the case discussants proceed on the assumption that a discussion of the material stake is all that is required to analyze what is in contention in a given case-based situation without being able to identify what constitutes the material stake in complex cases. I invoke the notion of 'complexity' here to refer to a case where the case writer's comments in the 'teaching notes' cannot subsume all the levels of semantic 'over-determination' built into the case. These are the cases that instructors like to use repeatedly since there is always something new that can be said about it by either the instructor himself or the next batch of case discussants. It is therefore important to understand the relationship between 'text and context' during a case analysis in a business school or in any act of interpretation. The meaning of a case will vary depending on the pedagogical contexts in which it is being invoked (Srinivasan, 2010a). This problem of complexity also makes it difficult to decide what to do after the analysis of options because the existential stake - which may not have been included in the criteria of evaluation - interrupts the trajectory of the case analysis. Why does this happen? This happens because the material stake is mediated by an existential stake which psychoanalysts refer to as 'desire.' The term 'desire' is not to be construed as necessarily 'libidinal desire,' but as 'existential desire.' The term, 'existential,' is an attempt to call attention to the structural lack that the subject experiences in language in the Lacanian model of desire which is based on structural linguistics. The main assumption in structural linguistics is that the structure of language is differential rather than referential. The application of this model to the speaking subject results in the splitting of the subject between the 'statement' and the 'utterance' and has important implications for both a theory of subjectivity and how the 'split' subject behaves at work or speaks from the couch (Lacan, 1960; Arrivé, 1992; Fink, 2004;

Arnaud and Vanheule, 2007; Fink, 2007). This structural lack is also related to the stance that the speaking subject takes towards the meaning of life, the meaning of language, the meaning of ethics, and how these categories relate to each other in the context of either a situation analysis or a stakeholder analysis in the classroom when the case method is the predominant tool of education in professional schools like those at Harvard University (Garvin, 1991; Garvin, 2003).

II.   Stakeholder Analysis

The relationship between the existential and material dimensions in a stake-holder analysis is usually misunderstood because a case analysis is often reduced to the linear dimension in the form of a mere listing of options during a case analysis. It is therefore easy to overlook the fact that the options before a decision-maker cannot be analyzed in the absence of the explicit criteria of evaluation. It is by understanding the significance of the criteria of evaluation, then, that we will be able to work out the relationship between the existential and material stakes that form the two co-ordinates of the decision-making situation. It is the criteria of evaluation that bring out the fact that the notion of 'rationality' that is deployed in decision-making situations is not absolute but takes the form of 'bounded rationality.' This is because there is a cost factor in all forms of decision-making ranging from the absolute to the bounded (March & Simon 1993). In the absence of the acceptable criteria of evaluation, however, a case analysis cannot proceed beyond an elementary listing and discussion of options - no matter how many interesting options have been identified. In other words, the decision-maker will not know what option to choose unless he has some clarity on what sort of decisions are acceptable to a given firm. In other words, the 'criteria of evaluation' include the terms, 'values' and 'valuation,' which, in turn, can be understood as the acceptable ways of thinking about decisions and the modalities of processing value addition in the firm. Values represent the ethical system from which the firm draws its moorings. Valuation however is related to the economic system that defines the material representation of value addition in any given transaction. A firm must resist the temptation to ignore ethical values in the interest of mere valuation. The criteria of evaluation then not only capture the value system in a firm, but also represent a principle of cognitive economy. So agreements or disagreements on any given decision can be identified by examining the criteria of evaluation that were invoked in a particular situation. The notion of 'agreeing to agree' or 'agreeing to disagree' on the merits of a decision amongst stakeholders, then, is only made possible by formalizing the criteria of evaluation.

III.   The Existential Stake and the Material Stake

Let us start by examining the relationship between the existential stake and the material stake in a simple stake-holder analysis and see how that affects the listing and analysis of options during a case analysis. Cases analyses often jumpstart the process of a stake-holder analysis, I feel, by trying to 'quantify the material stake' in a hurry either because the analysis is only interested in the material stake or because the case discussants are not comfortable in coming to terms with the dynamics of complexity, intangibility, and uncertainty that constitute the existential stake in the case analysis. Why does this happen? I think this happens because the basic assumptions of agency theory are so powerful in business studies that they have now gone beyond the ambit of the interpersonal dynamics of the principal-agent relationship within theories of the firm (Mahoney, 2005). These assumptions on what constitute the behavioral dimensions of the locus of agency are now routinely invoked in understanding the behavior of all stake-holders rather than so-called agents per se (Jensen & Meckling 1979; Jensen, 1994a). The limitation with this approach, however, is that - beyond a point - it leads to the mechanical generation of options in problem solving situations since the levels of psychic 'over-determination' that constitute theories of 'human nature' are lost when subjectivity is reduced to the mere notion of agency. This is not to deny the importance of agency theory at all since it has its specific uses in financial contexts, but a reminder of the fact that its presuppositions about subjectivity are not applicable in all contexts. Agency theory should not be misunderstood as a theory of human nature or even as a full-fledged theory of subjectivity and applied indiscriminately outside the realm of finance or conflated with sociological terms like 'individual' or individualism as a form of being (Williams, 1988; Fink, 1995). The concerns expressed here about reducing subjects to agents pertains to the fact that while a certain amount of reductiveness brings clarity in understanding the role and behaviour of agents initially, the moment of reductiveness must be seen as a theoretical move to explain a particular set of phenomena rather than as an accurate representation of human behavior or human nature as such. The mechanical generation of options then is linked to pushing this heuristic moment of reductiveness a little further than is warranted by the demands of case analysis where there may be other factors to ameliorate the compulsions and temptations of agency.

IV.   Desire And Strategic Leadership

If everything in managerial psychology is reducible to the problem of agency or agency-type behavior, how are we to even explain the existence of 'strategic leadership' as a problem solving approach in firms?

Whether strategic leadership is defined as a rectification of the problems inherent in agency thereby validating the presuppositions of agency theory, or as a necessary 'supplement' to agency theory and transaction cost theory, it will suffice - in the context of a case analysis in business schools - to at least admit that such approaches exist in order to learn to think non-reductively (Ghoshal and Moran, 2005a; Nohria and Khurana, 2010). Unless the participants in the case discussion work out more sophisticated criteria of evaluation which avoid these reductive dimensions, the level of the case discussion will plummet to mere truisms rather than generate insights that are worthy of the discursive structure of the case method. So even though the notion of desire is not a part of the standard vocabulary in a case discussion, it is worth introducing it here - albeit with some caution - in order to understand the mediation and scope of the existential element in a case analysis or a case discussion (Copjec, 1994; Fink, 1996a). It is then possible to extend the notion of desire, by implication, to the challenges of strategic leadership (Cluley, 2008). The main contention here is that the exercise of strategic leadership is an attempt to undo the damage caused by the temptations of agency on previous occasions and to then set the firm on the right course of action. Strategic leaders do this by lending support to what must be done in order to correct a given situation by lending their authority and mystique in problem solving situations (Kets de Vries et al, 1994; Bernhut, 2002). While all leaders aspire to do this to some extent, the notion of the 'strategic' is invoked here as a way of recognizing the fact that undoing the excesses of agency must come to terms with not only the 'contingent' element, but also with the 'systemic' elements of which the 'contingent' element is but a symptom. Strategic leadership then is the attempt to use the symptomatic event to fix a systemic problem without reducing it, as in the case of agency, to yet another way of merely furthering a personal stake in the situation. In this sense, strategic leadership is necessarily ethical since the leader is able to clearly articulate, and indeed decisively intervene, in the 'interstitial' space that exists between the loci occupied by the agent, the leader, the subject, and the system. Understanding the relationship between these loci makes it possible to discuss a case as an instance of 'complex dynamics' rather than reduce it to the 'linear dynamics' involved in pursuing the stake that is synonymous with just a particular locus or form of stake-holding. It is the propensity to do this that necessitated reductive theories like agency theory and transaction cost theory in the first place. What is needed by way of corrective measures relates then to 'good' theories of management since 'radical performance improvement' is possible. In order to make such improvements in performance a reality, however, there must be an enabling relationship between management theory and management practice. Bad management theory should not hinder good management practice by making reductive models of human nature the de facto reality of subjectivity in management theory and practice. Instead management theorists should push for dynamic models of organizational life and behavior and remain vigilant about reductive assumptions (Ghoshal and Bartlett, 1997; Ghoshal et al, 2000; Arnaud, 2002; Bruch and Ghoshal, 2004; Ghoshal and Moran, 2005b).

V.   Articulating Stakes As Performative Speech-Acts

What the different loci, in which case discussants position themselves, or are allotted to in the course of a case discussion by the instructor, represents will however vary in the process of actually articulating a stake during the case analysis. This assumes that the case instructor and case discussants agree on the levels of complexity that are admissible in the context of a given case analysis. There are also situations when the act of articulating a stake is not independent of what is defined to be a stake, but emerges in the context of the articulation of the stake as a 'performative speech-act' (Austen, 1955; Searle, 1970) as those interested in the problems of firm identity, personal identity, and conflict resolution will know. While the purely materialistic notion of agency may be useful in situations where the stake is well-defined and quantifiable, a linguistically mediated notion of an existential stake is more relevant to understanding the 'intangibles' that are built into agency theory. However the existential stake cannot be stated as a simple propositional speech-act that follows from a process of deep introspection by the parties doing business in order to resolve a conflict or structure a deal. In such a case, the parties will turn to the Other in the locus of Law or the locus of Desire to find a resolution. In either case, the 'structural agency of the Other' is the locus in which the parties desire, or should desire, an equitable resolution (Lacan, 1988; Lacan, 2007). This resolution may take the form of arbitration, dialogue, or regulation depending on the situation; it may also be articulated as a demand for a consultancy based relationship and in the fantasy structure of the entrepreneur (Arnaud, 1998; Jones and Spicer, 2005). What all these modalities have in common is the structural relationship between Law and Desire as the constitutive matrix in terms of how an act is defined, described, or interpreted in the socio-symbolic. This is also why game theory, for instance, is of perennial interest to both strategic theory, which focuses on what the firm must do; and with agency theory, which is preoccupied with why the agent is more likely to do what he wants to do rather than keep the interests of the firm in mind (in the absence of the necessary incentives in order to do so). While most agents are actually well-behaved - given that they have to maintain their reputation as trust-worthy professionals - agency theory has a propensity to work with a 'broader' definition of an agent who is excessively preoccupied with his own interests to the exclusion of other concerns. Nuanced versions of agency theory have

however tried to address these concerns and admit that this is not necessarily the case and have tried to go beyond a static definition of an agent (Jensen, 1994b).

VI. Mediation In The Locus Of The Other

What the existential and material stakes have in common, however, is the notion of mediation through the locus of the Other whether or not agents have a formal understanding of this process (outside the specific areas in which they happen to be situated). There is no direct way of naming desire in the structural sense since it is 'always-already' mediated by the agency of the Other in the locus of Law or the locus of Desire. This notion of mediation, through the locus of the Other, has however remained unexamined for a host of complex reasons in business studies; and, more specifically, in the theory and practice of the case method because of the usual bias on the importance of quantifying a stake. In agency theory, for example, the 'margin of deviation' in the agent's behavior is important in order to take corrective action. Hence, the default assumptions demand that the behaviour of an average agent in the locus of agency be defined as that which is within a measurable range of deviation. We may however be confronted with a situation where the agents do not know what they desire any more. In such situations, they must turn to the mediation of the competitor firm, or to the Other in the locus of Law or in the locus of Desire, to find out what is it that they must desire through the 'inter-subjective logic' that game theory has made its own (Brandenburger and Nalebuff 2009); hence, the notion of 'strategic imitation' in strategic theory. Here the main assumption is that even if the subject doesn't know what he wants or what he must do, the competition has a good idea of what it is up to. The subject therefore decides to imitate the competition as a strategic move. This spares the subject the need to think-through the situation in which his firm finds itself – this phenomenon is worth studying in the context of 'strategic imitation' since there is always a mix of firms in any given market; a few of these firms will 'innovate' and the rest will 'imitate' (Naranjo-Valencia et al, 2011). This inter-subjective logic is the structure within which the subject must not only identify what constitutes the existential object of desire, but also work-through what it represents for his sense of identity as a subject (Bruss, 1981). A case discussion then must be willing to come to terms with the fact that there is no 'non-discursive' way of analyzing a situation. It must also contend with the problems of 'reflexivity,' or the 'reflexive dynamics' of the markets, and how that is reflected in case discussions in business schools (Srinivasan, 2010b). The term 'discursive' is used here to capture the link between language and desire through the modalities of speech in a case discussion. This link or relationship between language and desire is the mainstay of the case method as in linguistic approaches to psychoanalysis to which it bears a resemblance (Lacan, 1953).

VII. Desire In The Locus Of The Other

The desire that is located in a given locus is itself a function of the logic of the situation in which the stake-holder finds himself - that is why when a case analysis is staged as a role-play, the case discussant finds himself saying things that he would not have caught himself saying outside that discussion. If however the case discussant doesn't say that which follows from the logic of the discussion per se, then, he is not a genuine participant in the case analysis. Integrity in case analysis has to do with 'playing the part' that the case discussant allots himself to the best of his ability rather than saying what he wants to say. It is therefore not a response to the assignment question: 'What would you do in your personal capacity?' but 'What would you do if you were in the locus of the decision-maker?' This, again, is not correctly understood. Case discussants suddenly say things that have nothing whatsoever to do with the role that they are playing by articulating their personal feelings midway through the case discussion without using the assignment question to guide them to a more meaningful discussion. This is because they resist the logical momentum of the arguments that are specific to the locus from which they are speaking since doing so will violate their positioning strategy as case discussants in the class. This gap, then, between how they position themselves, and how the logical momentum of a case discussion positions them, or plays out in the course of the case, becomes a source of underlying anxiety in a case discussion. It is only by remaining steadfast to their respective loci that the participants will be able to able to traverse all the three stages of the case analysis comprising 'the moment of seeing,' 'the period of understanding,' and 'the moment of concluding' that should ideally constitute the structure of the case analysis in both clinical and pedagogical situations since this typology is used to differentiate between 'chronological time' and 'logical time' in discursive situations and in the history of psychoanalysis itself (De Certeau, 1986; Miller, 1987; Fink, 1988; Lacan, 1988; Forrester, 1991; Forrester, 1992; Fink, 1996b; Srinivasan, 2010c).

VIII. Anxiety And Discursive Asymmetry

What is the role of anxiety then in a stake-holder analysis? What furthermore is the relationship between desire and anxiety as formal constructs in psychoanalysis? Will it not suffice if we just work with a notion of desire without introducing yet another category? In order to understand desire, I argue, it is necessary to presuppose the availability of a theory of anxiety (Lacan, 2014). We have to work out the dialectical

relationship between a theory of anxiety and a theory of desire whether we want to focus on the 'management of the self' or the 'management of the firm' since the latter presupposes the ability to do the former (Drucker, 2010; Srinivasan, 2010d; Srinivasan, 2010e). A close analysis of any case will reveal that the relationship between stake-holders does not proceed, or cannot be understood, merely as an attempt to further their material interests in a given situation since the case details do not simplistically spell out what is at stake in the case. Not only is the identification of what is at stake a part of the process of theoretical discovery in the context of a case analysis, the very notion of what is at stake is akin to a dialectical event with inter-subjective dimensions. In other words, anxiety is a clue to desire since, in the psychoanalytic understanding, anxiety is a way of 'sustaining desire when the object is missing' in the symbolic other. There is another definition of anxiety as well which is relevant to my argument. Anxiety, in this formulation, arises when the subject is not clear what is it that the Other expects of him in a given situation (Evans, 1997a). Anxiety arises then in the context of the gap between the subject and the Other (Williams, 2000). This form of anxiety manifests itself as a low tolerance for 'uncertainty' in the context of a case discussion (Srinivasan, 2012) and the unwillingness on the part of the case instructor to listen adequately to the case discussants. This form of anxiety leads to a pedagogical situation in case analysis that is best described as 'discursive asymmetry' (Leonard, 1991; Srinivasan, 2011). This is particularly the case in contentious matters pertaining to brand identity and corporate identity; hiring, firing, and compensation of employees; performance appraisals and team work; and, finally, in the practice of leadership. These are but a few of the important instances where the dialectical relationship between anxiety and desire can be discussed in the context of a case analysis. Unless this relationship is well-understood, and the modalities of pedagogical containment worked-through, it will be difficult to train a new generation of case instructors on what steps should be taken to drain anxiety from the classroom. Instructors who do not know how to do this will suffer from performance anxiety and feel inhibited during case discussions. The task here is not to exhaust a theory of anxiety per se, but to invoke it in order to relate it to a theory of desire. This will not only make it possible to supplement those aspects of the function of agency that are not routinely discussed in the context of agency theory in business studies, but to come up with a more nuanced model of how anxiety and desire play out in case discussions. Psychoanalysis is routinely invoked in the humanities and the social sciences as a perennial source of theoretical insights and as a method of interpretation (Jones, 1948; Richfield, 1963; Macey, 1981; Paul, 1989; Leupin, 1991); it is time to do the same in business studies, management, and public administration as well (Kets de Vries and Miller, 1986; Kets de Vries et al, 1991; McSwite, 1997; Andersen and White, 2003; Srinivasan, 2010f).

IX. Desire And Anxiety In Management

Let us start then by situating an elementary trajectory of desire in the context of a case discussion. Here the term 'desire' is to be understood as a structural relationship between 'lack' and 'being.' The subject that speaks is haunted by a lack which he wishes to articulate in relation to a given locus that is identified with a particular stake-holder in the context of the case analysis. The assumption of this locus is a temporary identification with this stake-holder and what the object of this stake-holder's desire is becomes known only retroactively when the subject allows himself to think through the logic of the stake-holder's locus in relation to those of the other stake-holders in contention. The notion of a stake-holder's 'interest' however presupposes that a stake-holder knows exactly what he wants in a given situation and the analysis of the situation only reinforces our hunch in the first place. The notion of desire however is a way of saying that in situations that are not clearly articulated, the stake-holder will find that his interests are not by any means obvious. The stake-holder's interest is, interestingly enough, often dictated by the narrative logic of the discursive moment in which the stake-holder finds himself rather than in terms of a pre-determined material stake that can be clearly demarcated (Schafer, 1980; Davis, 1983; Schliefer, 1983, Davis, 1987). This is because an emerging or existential stake could be 'contingent' rather than 'pre-given' like a quantifiable material stake. Economic theory and financial theory work mainly with a pre-given material stake and therefore overlook the importance of an existential stake for employees, firms, organizations, and stakeholders.

X. Anxiety And Narrative Logic

If this anxiety of being subject to a narrative logic is not worked-through by the case discussants, the case analysis will not be a contribution to the resolution of an impasse. Hence, the need to understand the role played by anxiety in constituting the 'objet a' (i.e. the cause of desire) during a stake-holder analysis (Evans, 1997b). Case analyses are full of such objects which lend a desiccated air to the analysis unless the instructor and the participants are willing to work-through desire and anxiety. This problem of the 'individuation' of the subject's desire is linked to the existential quest to find himself as both the subject of action and the object of knowledge which psychoanalysts identify with the genealogy of subjectivity in the history of psychoanalysis (Richardson, 1983; Goux, 1993); hence the need to come to terms with anxiety given that it suffuses the structure of speech in stake-holder analysis and work out its implications for the structure and process of case

analysis in the classroom. The inability to handle anxiety will lead to the mechanical invocation of a fetish. The case itself may be forced to take on the role of a fetish which functions like a defense mechanism (of the case discussant's ego) curtailing thereby the inherent possibilities of the case method. Invoking a fetish will also prevent the generation of the insights that are necessary to justify the uniqueness of the case method as an inter-discursive platform in the attempt to balance the analytic and discursive functions of the case discussion. To summarize: what many business schools like is the 'glamour' of the case method but the 'certainty' of the lecture method without realizing the contradiction in asking for both in a model of teaching or learning. The experience of the Harvard Business School, as embodied through the very notion of a 'case' in the Anglo-American tradition of professional education, is to allow for and make the provisions necessary to work-through anxiety in the context of a case analysis in the classroom (Freud, 1914; French, 1997). This need for working through is not just relevant for the hysterical subject in analysis; but, above all, for the pedagogical subject that fears the emergence of the unconscious and prefers the safety and assurance of the lecture method. Anxiety and desire are not merely affective states that concern the instructor and the case discussants but the institution as well since it is the institution that serves to contain the affects unleashed by the case method.

XI. Conclusion

The overwhelming impression that I want to convey here is that the participants in a case discussion know instinctively like psychoanalysts that 'the unconscious is structured like a language.' That is why they do not want any unseemly encounters with discursive situations - lest they allow themselves to be inadvertently 'hystericized' during the case discussion (Miel, 1967; Forrester, 1980). The lecture method offered students and faculty the safety of working with knowledge rather than attempt to build competencies and skill-sets (Contardo & Wensley, 2004). The crux of the resistance to the case method then is precisely the anxiety that pedagogical outcomes in such a process may well be beyond the control of any of the case discussants. That is why there is always a need to 'compare-and-contrast' the differences between the two methods for case discussants that are being initiated or socialized in the case method (Kavous, 2006). I use the term 'initiation' to refer to pedagogical contexts where the case method is not the only method of teaching and 'socialization' to situations where it is more or less the dominant form of teaching like the Harvard Business School, the Asian Institute of Management, Manila, and the Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad (Srinivasan, 2005). What is at stake in a case discussion in particular and the case method in general then is not the desire of a particular stake-holder per se. The desire of the stakeholder, needless to say, will vary from case to case. It is much more important therefore to identify the 'conditions of possibility of desire' in relation to a theory of the unconscious. What 'insists' on being understood from a structural point of view during a case discussion is the structural interdependence between speech, desire, language, the letter, and the unconscious in a theory of subjectivity (Lacan, 1966; Chaitin, 1988; Gasperoni, 1996; Ragland and Bracher, 1991). Hence, as Lacan puts it, 'the function of desire is a last residuum of the effect of the signifier in the subject. Desidero is the Freudian cogito (Lacan, 1977a).' What the subject seeks to know is the truth of his own desire. This truth will however emerge only as the Desire of the Other or be precipitated in the locus of the Other. The resistance to the case method in business schools then bears an interesting analogue to the resistance to psychoanalysis itself as a discourse and as a method of scientific discovery (Freud, 1950). What these methods in contention have in common apart from an interest in using the case method as a basic 'unit of cognition' is the fact that they require a willingness to encounter the unconscious in the gap between the speaker's 'intention' and the speaker's 'utterance' in a discursive situation without succumbing to the anxiety that resides in this gap (Forrester, 1996; Forrester, 2007). That is why it is not possible to prepare for a case analysis in a business school like a presentation before an audience of businessmen. Likewise, the basic, or 'fundamental rule' of psychoanalysis is 'free association' - it is not possible to prepare for an analysis by making a presentation on the patient's childhood or whatever aspect of the patient's life may be in contention. Instead of making a presentation the patient is expected to say whatever comes to the 'surface' of his consciousness when he finds himself on the couch (Apollon, 1988). The resistance to psychoanalysis is more or less a resistance to this fundamental rule as a methodological stricture rather than to what has been discovered by psychoanalytic theory so far in relation to the Oedipus complex, the theory of repression, and its secondary derivatives (Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988a; Laplanche and Pontalis, 1988b). Both forms of the case method (in the classroom and clinic) then are based upon the idea of fortuitous discoveries, of stumbling unexpectedly into professional and personal situations that have the pedagogical or therapeutic value of an unexpected insight (Mowitt, 2002) albeit in the context of a discursive method that appears in the beginning to be a waste of time (Srinivasan, 2010g). It is these insights however which come unsought by just following the analytic method that constitutes the main stay of the psychoanalytic subject. While these insights may come unsought, they will make sense only if they are worked-through systematically in either the pedagogical or clinical situations in which the subject finds himself (Felman, 1989). And so, to conclude, as Jacques Lacan puts it, 'the unconscious is constituted by the effects of speech on the subject; it is the dimension in which the subject is determined in the development of the effects of speech...consequently the unconscious is

structured like a language (Lacan, 1977b).' What is at stake in the case method then is nothing less than what is at stake in psychoanalysis itself – the emergence of the unconscious in acts of speech and the need to equip both clinicians and case instructors with the intellectual wherewithal to manage it when it does so. All the traditional problems of the case method then have to be rethought from the point of view of the unconscious and its 'formations' (Evans, 1997c). These problems include how to begin, develop, moderate, punctuate, and close a case discussion. They also demand the willingness to speak and the willingness to listen on the part of the case discussants. All these, simply put, are discursive challenges. A psychoanalytic interpretation is relevant in so far as psychoanalysis is itself a discourse that is preoccupied with the structure and function of discourse. The psychoanalytic model of the subject is itself then to be situated within Lacanian discourse theory (Žižek, 1998). It is the application of Lacanian discourse theory that will serve as the necessary tool to re-vitalize the theory and practice of the case method.

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